Enactment of Emigration of Amendment Bill, 2002

1705. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to enact the Emigration Amendment Bill, 2002 to facilitate setting up a Central Manpower Export Promotion Council and to constitute the Indian Overseas Welfare Fund;

(b) whether this proposed enactment would sort out the problems being faced by the lowpaid emigrants to Gulf countries like Ayahs and housemaids; and

(c) whether there were proposals from the Overseas recruitment/ travel agents registered with his Ministry to take care of social welfare/ insurance requirements for housemaids and if so, whether Government would enlist their participation by making suitable provisions in the proposed Bill?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) to (c) The Government propose to enact the emigration (Amendment) Bill, 2002 to set up the Central Manpower Export Promotion Council and constitute Indian Overseas Workers' Welfare Fund. The functions of the Council will be promotion of employment opportunities for emigrants; projection of manpower services; collection of statistics and information relating to employment opportunities and matters connected therewith; collection and maintenance of statistics and information in respect of persons seeking employment; liaison with other export promotion agencies; recommendation to the Central Government about the standards and guidelines for overseas employment; and administration of Indian Overseas Workers' Welfare Fund. The proposed Indian Overseas Workers' Welfare Fund will meet the contingencies, such as making the payment to the Embassies or High Commissions for arranging return ticket for the workers who get stranded in the foreign countries; meeting the cost of transportation of dead bodies of the workers, granting financial assistance to such workers who become partially or permanently disabled and providing relief for such other causes as may be specified in the rules. The assistance would not, however, be provided to illegal migrants.

Two persons representing the Recruiting Agents will be Members of the proposed Council.

The Government had received some proposals from recruiting agents, for providing insurance cover, which were not accepted so far in view of the proposed amendment.

Unemployed Persons

1706. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state.

(a) the number of unemployed persons particularly those living below the poverty line in the rural areas of the country as on 30th June, 2002, district and State-wise; and

(b) the details of proposals formulated to provide employment to them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN: (a) Estimates of employment and unemployment are obtained through Labour Force Surveys conducted by National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) from time to time. As per the survey carried out during 1999-2000, approx 26% of the population is living below the poverty line. State wise details of the number and percentage of population below poverty line and the unemployment rates in rural areas of the country are given in the Statement. (*See* below)

(b) The Tenth Plan will focus on providing gainful high quality employment to the additions to the labour force and it will be one of the monitorable objective for the 10th Plan and beyond. The growth strategy of the 10th Plan would lay emphasis on the rapid growth of those sectors which are likely to create high quality employment opportunities and deal with the policy constraints which discourage growth of employment. Particular attention would be paid to the policy environment influencing a wide range of economic activities which have a large employment potential.